


MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~
EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

ACTION
July 16, 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: HENRY A. KISSINGER
FROM: L. S.  EAGLEBURGER
SUBJECT: Cambodia and the PRC

Having become -- almost overnight -- one of the world's preeminent Asia experts, I offer the following thoughts on the Cambodian aspects of your Peking trip.

In the light of Sihanouk's latest blast (you will have seen the Reuter report -- Tab A) the immediate question for us becomes whether to remain silent in the face of such statements, or to say something soon to Peking. Should we remain silent Sihanouk may dig himself further into a position from which compromise would be difficult (although nothing is impossible for him); the danger of saying much more to Peking is that we will reveal a certain degree of anxiety.

I recommend that we say nothing until the Chinese respond on specific dates for your visit. If, at that time, they indicate reasonably positive expectations that you would not come home empty-handed, no additional push from you will be necessary. If, as seems more likely, they merely welcome you to Peking at a date of your choosing without mentioning the potential for a Cambodian solution, you will have two courses:

-- to go ahead with your visit, but eliminate any public expectation of obtaining much on Cambodia;

-- to propose postponement of your visit, probably until September.

The former course (which I do not recommend) would necessitate a public statement at a fairly early date to the effect that Cambodia will not be negotiated in Peking. The latter course (which I do recommend) could, through careful structuring of your message, cause some nervousness in Peking, and perhaps give Sihanouk pause. The desired result is to encourage Chinese pressure on Sihanouk, and to impress Sihanouk himself with the uncertainties of delay.

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(Tab B never transmitted)

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The draft at Tab B is a suggestion as to the line you might take with Han Hsu should the Chinese communication on visit dates be disappointing.

The Case Against

There is of course some danger that the Chinese will accommodate your postponement request. Given the almost certain continuation of Congressional opposition to U. S. air support after August 15, and the doubt about the present Cambodian government's ability to carry on thereafter, your bargaining position could well deteriorate. The costs of postponement would, in that case, be compounded by the diminished chance of satisfactory resolution of the Cambodian problem.

The Case For

It may well be, however, that the Chinese will elect to do what they can to bring Sihanouk or one of his people to the table in early August rather than suffer postponement of discussion of the other issues at hand. The time element is probably particularly important to Peking because of their desire to discuss, at first hand, the Brezhnev visit -- particularly certain aspects which you first broached with Huang Chen in San Clemente.

Regarding Sihanouk himself, it is difficult to see how a postponement proposal could worsen our position with him. On the surface his statements reflect patience and optimism over his standing in the event of a collapse of the present government following the bombing halt. That may well be an accurate reflection of his present thinking. But, he also has some reason to be apprehensive about his future with the Khmer Rouge. Thus, we might gently play on this concern if it exists, or seek to create it if it does not.

Given either interpretation of Sihanouk's current thinking, an indication of patience by you might make early August talks more attractive to him than they are now. Increased doubt in Sihanouk's mind about U. S. actions and options after August 15 might prove decisive if accompanied by the Chinese pressure we hope to evoke.

The draft at Tab B attempts to stimulate both these developments. It is an admittedly somewhat chancy course, since postponement carries greater risks than the alternative of accepting the omission of Cambodian negotiations in an early August visit -- an omission for which the public can be prepared in advance. To propose postponement does, however, offer the only chance for exercising leverage over Sihanouk, directly and through the Chinese. I present it to you as a course worth considering.

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70517

HAK, SCOWCROFT & LL:

SIHANOUK STATES NEITHER HE NOR ANY MEMBER OF HIS EXILED GOVERNMENT WILL BE IN CONTACT WITH THE KISSINGER PARTY DURING HAK'S VISIT; SIHANOUK DOUBTS THAT U.S. BOMBING WILL CEASE ON AUGUST 15.

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RNR67

SIHANOUK:

BY JAMES PRINGLE

PEKING, JULY 13, REUTER -- PRINCE NORODOM SIHANOUK THE DEPOSED CAMBODIAN HEAD OF STATE, SAID TODAY HE WOULD LEAVE NEXT WEEK FOR A THREE-WEEK VISIT TO NORTH KOREA AND WOULD NOT MEET U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER DR HENRY KISSINGER WHEN HE COMES TO PEKING NEXT MONTH.

KISSINGER IS DUE HERE EARLY IN AUGUST FOR TALKS WITH CHINESE LEADERS. THE PRINCE LEAVES PEKING NEXT FRIDAY.

THE PRINCE SAID THAT EVEN IF HE WAS IN PEKING WHEN DR KISSINGER ARRIVED, HE WOULD REFUSE TO MEET HIM AND NO MEMBER OF HIS EXILED GOVERNMENT WOULD BE IN CONTACT WITH THE AMERICAN OFFICIAL.

SIHANOUK, WHO RETURNED TO PEKING LAST WEEK FROM A TWO-MONTH TOUR OF SOME AFRICAN AND EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, EXPRESSED PESSIMISM OVER THE CHANCES OF A SETTLEMENT IN CAMBODIA AND SAID HE HAD NO CONFIDENCE THAT U.S. BOMBING THERE WOULD END ON AUGUST 15.

THIS IS THE DATE AGREED BETWEEN PRESIDENT NIXON AND CONGRESS AS A COMPROMISE FOR ENDING U.S. AIR FORCE ATTACKS IN CAMBODIA.
MORE PJS/MIT 0916

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RNR68

SIHANOUK 2 PEKING

THE PRINCES STATEMENT APPEARED TO HAVE FINALLY SLAMMED THE DOOR ON ANY POSSIBILITY OF DIRECT CONTACT DURING KISSINGERS VISIT.

HE SAID ANY MEETING WITH KISSINGER WOULD OFFER PRESIDENT NIXON AN EXCUSE TO TELL CONGRESS AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE THAT NEGOTIATIONS WERE GOING ON.

THIS WOULD GIVE NIXON LEVERAGE WITH CONGRESS FOR A CONTINUATION OF THE BOMBING AFTER THE AUGUST 15 DEADLINE IN THE HOPE THAT THE ATTACKS WOULD FORCE SIHANOUKS SUPPORTERS TO THE CONFERENCE TABLE TO NEGOTIATE A CEASEFIRE, HE ADDED.

"BUT WE WILL NOT GIVE NIXON THAT SATISFACTION," THE PRINCE TOLD REPORTERS. "THERE WILL BE NO CONTACTS AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO FIGHT, FIGHT AND FIGHT UNTIL FINAL VICTORY EVEN IF THIS TAKES 10 YEARS OR MORE."

MORE PJS/MIT 0918

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RNR69

SIHANOUK 3 PEKING

THE PRINCE SAID HE DID NOT THINK THE WATERGATE SCANDAL WOULD STOP NIXON "IN HIS DETERMINATION TO GO ON BOMBING US.

"THIS IS ESPECIALLY SO IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT CONGRESS HAS ABDICATED ITS EXECUTIVE POWERS, VIS-A-VIS NIXON," HE ADDED.

THE CAMBODIAN LEADER AGAIN VEHEMENTLY DENIED THAT ANY "DELICATE NEGOTIATIONS" WERE UNDER WAY AS SUGGESTED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT.

HE REITERATED THAT A SETTLEMENT COULD ONLY COME ABOUT THROUGH COMPLETE CESSATION OF AMERICAN AIR ATTACKS AND THE ELIMINATION OF THE "TRAITOROUS" PHNOM PENH GOVERNMENT OF PRESIDENT LON NOL.

ASKED ABOUT THE REPORTED RETURN TO PEKING OF HUANG CHEN, HEAD OF CHINA'S LIAISON OFFICE IN THE UNITED STATES WHO HAD A MEETING WITH PRESIDENT NIXON IN SAN CLEMENTE LAST WEEK, THE PRINCE SAID HE HAD "NO NEW INFORMATION ON THIS."

INFORMED SOURCES IN WASHINGTON HAD SAID HUANG HAD RETURNED TO THE CHINESE CAPITAL FOR CONSULTATIONS ON CAMBODIA AND OTHER ISSUES.

SIHANOUK SAID, HOWEVER, THAT CHINESE PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI WOULD NEVER INTERFERE IN THE AFFAIRS OF HIS EXILED CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT OR GIVE ANY HOPE TO THE AMERICANS AS FAR AS A CAMBODIAN SETTLEMENT WAS CONCERNED.
MORE PJS/MIT 0921

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RNR70

SIHANOUK 4 PEKING

SIHANOUK RENEWED HIS APPEAL MADE AT A STATE BANQUET IN PEKING LAST WEEK FOR ARMS AND AMMUNITION.

HE SAID TODAY THAT HIS FORCES IN CAMBODIA COULD FIGHT FOR 20 YEARS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WITH EQUIPMENT CAPTURED FROM THE TROOPS OF THE LON NOL GOVERNMENT. "BUT IF WE ARE TO TAKE PHNOM PENH, WE NEED MORE AMMUNITION."

HE SAID HE HAD REQUESTED CHINA AND NORTH VIETNAM, WHICH HAD STOPPED SUPPLYING ARMS TO HIS FORCES IN CAMBODIA FOLLOWING THE SIGNING OF THE PARIS PEACE AGREEMENT ON INDOCHINA, TO RECONSIDER THEIR POSITION IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT NIXON HAD "WIPE OUT" ARTICLE 20 OF THE AGREEMENT.

ARTICLE 20 OF THE PARIS ACCORD SAYS, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT FOREIGN COUNTRIES SHALL PUT AN END TO ALL MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN CAMBODIA AND LAOS, TOTALLY WITHDRAW AND REFRAIN FROM REINTRODUCING INTO THE TWO COUNTRIES TROOPS, MILITARY ADVISERS AND MILITARY PERSONNEL, ARMAMENTS, MUNITIONS AND WAR MATERIAL.

NORTH KOREA, WHOSE PREMIER KIM IL-SUNG HAD INVITED THE PRINCE TO PAY A FRIENDLY VISIT BEGINNING NEXT FRIDAY, HAD OFFERED HIM EVERY ASSISTANCE IN THIS RESPECT, THE EXILED CAMBODIAN LEADER ADDED.

REUTER PJS-D0927

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TAB B

The U.S. side has taken note of the Chinese side's proposal that Dr. Kissinger visit Peking on August ____ and is grateful for the invitation.

The U.S. side would like to suggest, however, that Dr. Kissinger's visit to Peking be delayed until some mutually satisfactory later date, perhaps during the month of September.

Prince Sihanouk's statements to the effect that neither he nor members of his entourage will be prepared to meet with Dr. Kissinger during his visit to Peking eliminates one of the principal purposes for the visit. The U.S. side deeply regrets this fact since, as Dr. Kissinger has on several occasions explained, the U.S. side was prepared to initiate discussions with Prince Sihanouk looking toward the creation of a situation in Cambodia which would bring peace to the people of that country.

The U.S. further regrets the necessity to postpone Dr. Kissinger's visit because we had firmly hoped that the process of developing a better understanding between Prince Sihanouk and Dr. Kissinger would have encouraged an even more rapid improvement in relations between the U.S. and the PRC -- relations that have matured so well to this point because of the developing community of interests that exists between our two countries.

In the absence of any indication of a willingness on Prince Sihanouk's part to engage in conversations with Dr. Kissinger, it will be necessary for the U.S. to do what it can through other means to strengthen the position of the present government.

It may well be that both Prince Sihanouk and Dr. Kissinger will be in a better position to discuss their respective points of view in a meaningful way at a mutually acceptable later date. Further conversations between Dr. Kissinger and representatives of the PRC on the range of issues that have already been partially discussed with Ambassador Huang Chen could, of course, be discussed at that time as well.

The U.S. would be interested in the views of the Chinese side.

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Henry: The above would be handed over to Han Hsu. You might accompany it with the following remarks:

-- I particularly regret that I am forced to suggest a delay because we are receiving an increasing number of reports of developing Soviet interest in (and perhaps involvement in) the Cambodian situation.

-- The Soviet Charge in Phnom Penh, for example, has recently been in contact with senior officials of the Cambodian government about how the USSR might be helpful in negotiations between the two Cambodian sides. During those conversations, according to our reports, the Charge rejected the idea of any dialogue with Sihanouk, whom he described as unacceptable to the Khmer Rouge, and as outmoded.

-- We are extremely doubtful that Soviet involvement will be beneficial to the interests of either of us.

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